



# U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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## *News Advisory*

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## Committee Begins Hearings Tuesday into Reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act

- What:** Oversight hearing entitled, "To Examine the Impact and Effectiveness of the Voting Rights Act"
- Who:** Subcommittee on the Constitution - Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Ohio), Chairman
- When:** 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 18, 2005
- Where:** 2141 Rayburn Building

The right to vote is the most fundamental and essential right in the U.S. democratic system of government. Forty years ago, the Congress passed one of the most significant pieces of legislation during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in the Voting Rights Act (VRA), which served and continues to serve as the primary tool Congress utilizes to remedy our country's sad history of racial discrimination in voting. The VRA's successes are reflected in the higher levels of minorities who have registered to vote and who participate in our political system.

In 2007, the six temporary provisions of the Voting Rights Act are set to expire. Congress has not revisited the VRA since 1992, when it amended and extended Section 203, the bilingual election assistance provision. Twenty-five years have passed since Congress examined the remaining temporary provisions, including Section 5, the preclearance requirement. **Tuesday's hearing is the first in a series of hearings that the Subcommittee on the Constitution will hold to examine the impact and effectiveness of the VRA since 1982, and over the last forty years, and its continued relevance in protecting minority voting in the future.**

### THIS HEARING WILL...

- ⇒ Explore the impact that the VRA has had on minority voting rights since 1965.
- ⇒ Examine the importance of the VRA's temporary provisions in protecting minority voting rights.
- ⇒ Identify and examine the past and current barriers preventing or diluting the minority vote.
- ⇒ Examine the constitutionality of the VRA and Congress's broad authority under Section 2 of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to remedy racial discrimination.
- ⇒ Examine the continued need for the VRA in order to protect minority voting rights.

**WITNESSES:** **Hon. Jack Kemp**, former Congressman, HUD Secretary, and Republican Vice Presidential candidate; **Mr. Joe Rogers**, Commissioner, National Voting Rights Commission and former Colorado Lt. Governor; **Mr. Marc Morial**, President and CEO, National Urban League; and **Ms. Ann Marie Tallman**, President and Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund.

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